a2 was collected by vacuum filtration and washed with H_2O (1.5 L) to afford the product (3) as a pale yellow solid (42 g, 0.144 mol).

a3 (Amended, page 14, lines 4-5) H_5IO_6 (1.14 g, 5 mmol) was added and the reaction mixture was stirred vigorously at room temperature for 1 hour

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

a4 4. (Amended) The process of claim 1 wherein said iodide is a quarternary ammonium iodide or inorganic iodide and said inert medium is an inert organic solvent.

a5 6. (Amended) The process of claim 4 wherein said inert organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of:

a) an amide;

b) an acyclic ether;

c) a cyclic ether;

d) an alkyl alkanoate wherein the alkyl group has 1 to 4 carbon atoms and the alkanoate group has 2 to 4 carbon atoms;

e) a halogenated hydrocarbon;

f) toluene; and

g) mixtures thereof.

7. (Amended) The process of claim 6 wherein the organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of:

a) DMF;

b) t-butyl-methyl ether;

c) THF;

d) acetonitrile;

e) methylene chloride; and

f) mixtures of the above solvents.

Q6

9. (Amended) The process of claim 6 wherein:

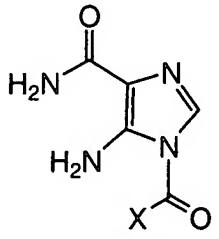
a) the organic solvent is a 50/50 mixture of THF/CH_3CN;

b) the oxidation/cyclization agent is H_5IO_6;

c) the iodide is Bu_4NI and

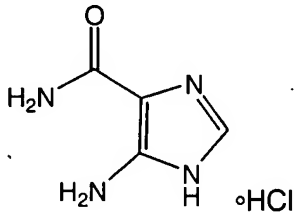
d) the reaction takes place at a temperature of about 0°C to about (+)60°C.

10. (Amended) A process for preparing a compound of the formula III:



III

which comprises reacting a compound of the formula 4:



4

with a compound of the formula X-CO-Y in the presence of an acid binding agent, wherein each of X and Y is the same or different leaving group, to yield a compound of the formula III.

Q7

15. (Amended) The process of claim 13 wherein the organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of

a) an amide;

b) an acyclic ether;

c) a cyclic ether;

d) an alkyl alkanoate wherein the alkyl group has 1 to 4 carbon atoms and the alkanoate group has 2 to 4 carbon atoms;

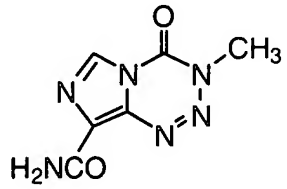
e) a halogenated hydrocarbon, and

f) mixtures thereof.

21. (Amended) The process of claim 17 wherein said compound of formula II is a 1-alkyl derivative of 5-amino-4-(aminocarbonyl)-1H-imidazole-1-carboxylic acid hydrazide wherein the alkyl group contains 1 to 6 carbon atoms.

22. (Amended) The process of claim 21 wherein said compound of formula II is 5-amino-4-(aminocarbonyl)-1H-imidazole-1-carboxylic acid 1-methylhydrazide.

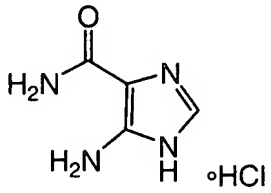
24. (Amended) A process for preparing temozolomide (1):



(1)

comprising:

a) reacting compound 4:



(4)

with 4-nitrophenyl chloroformate in the presence of triethylamine in CH_2Cl_2, under a nitrogen atmosphere at about 25°C to obtain compound (3):